REMARKS

Applicants have amended Claim 1 to define the present invention with more specificity. Support can be found on page 4, lines 30-32.

No new matter has been added. Entry is believed to be proper and respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the amendments, Claims 1-34 are pending. No additional claims fee is believed due.

THE INVENTION

The present invention is directed to a "non-immersive" treating or cleaning method for fabric article, wherein a limited amount of dry cleaning solvent, and optionally a cleaning adjunct is applied to the fabric article being treated. In one aspect of the present invention, the amount of the dry cleaning solvent applied to the fabric article is, at most, equal to the absorptive capacity of the dry weight of the fabric article (Page 4, lines 30-34 and claim 1) so that the "non-immersive" method contains essentially no free cleaning fluid. In contrast, the conventional "immersive" cleaning method employs a large quantity of the washing fluid such that the fabric article is submerged or plunged into the washing fluid bath (Page 4, lines 32-34).

REJECTIONS

Claim Rejection under 35 USC 102 over Perry et al.

The Examiner rejects claims 1-6, 9, 11-24 and 32-34 under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by Perry et al. (US 6,368,359). The Examiner states that Perry et al. teaches a process for stabilizing dry cleaning solutions. The Examiner asserts that an example of such process meets all the material limitations of the present claims. Further, The Examiner considers limitations such as fluid remaining on the fabrics and speed of the spin cycle are inherent results of a standard laundry machine wash cycle.

Applicants respectfully traverse.

Applicants point out that Perry et al. merely discloses a process for stabilizing a dry cleaning solvent by treating said solvent, after removing it from an article, with an aqueous solution, thereby purifying it (Col. 4, lines 42-46). Applicants submit that Perry et al. does not disclose a non-immersive cleaning process which limits the amount of fluid contacting a fabric article to a specific amount such that the process contains essentially no free cleaning fluid. Further, Applicants submit that Perry does not disclose a process which includes applying a mixture comprising a lipophilic fluid and an adjunct to a fabric article. Therefore, Perry et al. does not anticipate the presently claimed invention.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of this rejection.

Claim Rejection under 35 USC 102 over Brendt et al.

The Examiner rejects claims 1-6, 9, 11-24 and 32-34 under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by Brendt et al. (US 6,063,135). The Examiner states that Brendt et al. teaches a method for dry cleaning articles. The Examiner asserts that an example of such process meets all the material limitations of the present claims.

Applicants respectfully traverse.

Applicants point out that Brendt et al. is clearly directed to an "immersive" cleaning method wherein the articles being treated are immersed in the solvent and detergent composition while being agitated (Col. 3, line 18-20). Brendt et al. does not disclose a non-immersive cleaning process wherein the fluid contacting a fabric article is limited to a specific amount such that the process contains essentially no free cleaning fluid. Therefore, Brendt et al. does not anticipate the presently claimed invention.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of this rejection.

Claim Rejection under 35 USC 102 over Kilgour et al.

The Examiner rejects claims 1-9, 11-24 and 34 under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by Brendt et al. (US 6,310,029). The Examiner states that Kilgour et al. teaches a cleaning process and compositions. The Examiner asserts that an example of such process meets all the material limitations of the present claims.

Applicants respectfully traverse.

Applicants point out that Kilgour et al. discloses (1) a spot treatment process wherein the cleaning composition is applied to "localized" area(s); and (2) an immersive cleaning process wherein the article is immersed in a cleaning composition (Col. 5, lines 11-17 and lines 18-20). Applicants submit that Kilgour et al. does not disclose a non-immersive cleaning process wherein the fluid contacting the fabric article is limited to a specific amount such that the process contains essentially no free cleaning fluid; nor a uniform cleaning process wherein the solvent is "uniformly" applied to the fabric article by exposing non-contacted portions of the fabric article to the cleaning fluid. (Page 6, lines 18-23). Therefore, Kilgour et al. does not anticipate the presently claimed invention.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of this rejection.

Claim Rejection under 35 USC 102 over Madore et al.

The Examiner rejects claims 1-6, 9, 11-27 and 32-34 under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Madore et al. (US 5,057,240). The Examiner states that Brendt et al. teaches a method for dry cleaning articles. The Examiner asserts that an example of such process meets all the material limitations of the present claims.

Applicants respectfully traverse.

Applicants point out that Madore et al. is directed to a softening composition for use in a wash cycle (Col. 2, line 5-7). The wash cycle softening composition is typically "added to the wash liquor by the homemaker . . . before initiation of the wash cycle of the fabric laundering device." (Col. 1, line 68 – Col. 2, line 2). Applicants submit that a fair reading of Madore et al. would indicate that the cleaning method used by a homemaker and as disclosed by Madore et al., is not a non-immersive cleaning process. Specifically, the wash process used by a home maker does not limit the amount of cleaning fluid such that the wash process contains essentially no free cleaning fluid Therefore, Madore et al. does not anticipate the presently claimed invention.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of this rejection.

Claim Rejection under 35 USC 102 over Murphy et al.

The Examiner rejects claims 1-6, 9-24 and 32-34 under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by Murphy et al. (US 6,313,079). The Examiner states that Murphy et al. teaches dry cleaning compositions that are used in standard dry cleaning machines, which include solvent tanks, filters and solvent exits. The Examiner asserted that the reference meets all the material limitations of the present claims.

Applicants respectfully traverse.

Applicants point out that Murphy et al. is clearly directed to an "immersive" cleaning method commonly used in standard dry cleaning machines. Murphy et al. does not disclose a non-immersive cleaning process wherein the solvent contacting a fabric article is limited to a specific amount such that the process contains essentially no free cleaning fluid. Therefore, Murphy et al. does not anticipate the presently claimed invention.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of this rejection.

Claim Rejections under 35 USC 103 over Madore et al.

The Examiner rejects claims 1-6 and 9-34 under 35 USC 103 as being unpatentable over Madore et al. as applied above. The Examiner also asserted that finishing agents and hand modifying agents are well known in the art and do not lend patentable weight to the claims.

Applicants respectfully traverse.

Applicants submit that, based on the reasons presented above, Madore et al. does not teach or suggest a non-immersive dry cleaning method wherein the solvent contacting a fabric article is limited to a specific amount such that the process contains essentially no free cleaning fluid. Therefore, it does not render the presently claimed invention obvious.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of this rejection.

CONCLUSION

Applicants believe that the above represents a complete response to the Office Action. Withdrawal of objections and rejections and examination of all remaining claims on the merits are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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